

Study
Report
93-01

AD-A265 024



Junior Leader Development in Army Units

Joan Harman, Trueman R. Tremble, Jr.,
and Gerald F. Goodwin
U.S. Army Research Institute



U.S. Army Research Institute for the
Behavioral and Social Sciences

March 1993

93-11730



Approved for public release; distribution is unlimited

93 5 05 96 1

U.S. ARMY RESEARCH INSTITUTE FOR THE BEHAVIORAL AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

**A Field Operating Agency Under the Jurisdiction
of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel**

**EDGAR M. JOHNSON
Acting Director**

Technical review by

Angelo Mirabella
Jacquelyn Scarville

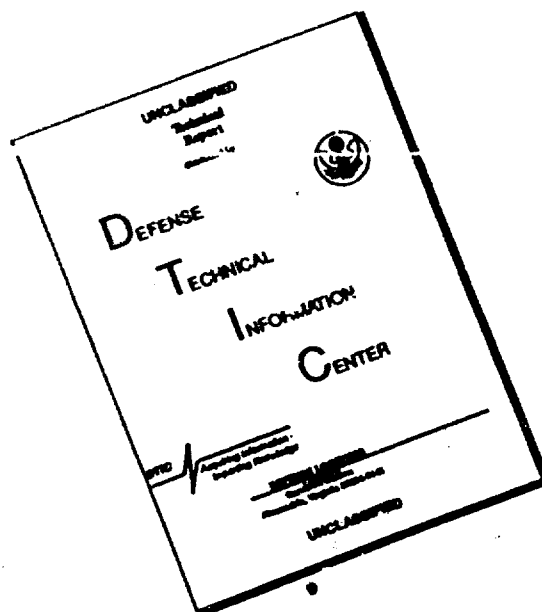
NOTICES

DISTRIBUTION: Primary distribution of this report has been made by ARI. Please address correspondence concerning distribution of reports to: U.S. Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences, ATTN: PERI-POX, 5001 Eisenhower Ave., Alexandria, Virginia 22303-5600.

FINAL DISPOSITION: This report may be destroyed when it is no longer needed. Please do not return it to the U.S. Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences.

NOTE: The findings in this report are not to be construed as an official Department of the Army position, unless so designated by other authorized documents.

DISCLAIMER NOTICE



THIS DOCUMENT IS BEST QUALITY AVAILABLE. THE COPY FURNISHED TO DTIC CONTAINED A SIGNIFICANT NUMBER OF PAGES WHICH DO NOT REPRODUCE LEGIBLY.

REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE			Form Approved OMB No. 0704-0188	
<small>Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to Washington Headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports, 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington, VA 22202-4302, and to the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Project (0704-0188), Washington, DC 20503.</small>				
1. AGENCY USE ONLY (Leave blank)	2. REPORT DATE 1993, March	3. REPORT TYPE AND DATES COVERED Final Jan 92 - Dec 92		
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE Junior Leader Development in Army Units		5. FUNDING NUMBERS 65803A 730 1131 H01		
6. AUTHOR(S) Harman, Joan; Tremble, Jr., Trueman R.; and Goodwin, Gerald F.				
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) U.S. Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences ATTN: PERI-RP 5001 Eisenhower Avenue Alexandria, VA 22333-5600		8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER ARI Study Report 93-01		
9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) Center for Army Leadership Fort Leavenworth, KS 66027		10. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY REPORT NUMBER --		
11. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES --				
12a. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY STATEMENT Approved for public release; distribution is unlimited.			12b. DISTRIBUTION CODE --	
13. ABSTRACT (Maximum 200 words) This study describes procedures and practices used by battalion commanders, command sergeants major, company commanders, and company first sergeants in armor, mechanized infantry, and light infantry Army units to develop leadership skills in junior leaders. It examined orientation, assessment, feedback, development, and evaluation procedures, as well as ways to improve leadership development. Findings reveal wide variations from unit to unit in criteria for successful leadership and the satisfaction of both senior and junior leaders with existing procedures. These findings can be used by the sponsor to strengthen the link between institutional and operational leadership training.				
14. SUBJECT TERMS Leadership Training Assessment Leader development Feedback			15. NUMBER OF PAGES 34	
			16. PRICE CODE --	
17. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF REPORT Unclassified	18. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF THIS PAGE Unclassified	19. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF ABSTRACT Unclassified	20. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT Unlimited	

Study Report 93-01

Junior Leader Development in Army Units

**Joan Harman, Trueman R. Tremble, Jr.,
and Gerald F. Goodwin**
U.S. Army Research Institute

Leadership and Organizational Change Technical Area
Paul A. Gade, Chief

Manpower and Personnel Research Division
Zita M. Simutis, Director

U.S. Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences
5001 Eisenhower Avenue, Alexandria, Virginia 22333-5600

Office, Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel
Department of the Army

March 1993

Army Project Number
2Q665803A730

Personnel and Training
Analysis Activity

Approved for public release; distribution is unlimited.

A primary mission of the Leadership and Organizational Change Technical Area of the U.S. Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences is to improve the development of commissioned and noncommissioned officers' leadership skills. One way to accomplish this goal is to enrich schoolhouse programs by incorporating unit leader development practices.

The Center for Army Leadership, Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, sponsored this study. The sponsor can use the findings to strengthen the link between institutional and operational leadership training. The work was approved by a Memorandum for Record signed by the Deputy Commandant, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, on 18 November 1991 and by the Commander, U.S. Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences, on 7 November 1991.

EDGAR M. JOHNSON
Acting Director

Accession For

NIL	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
DIRECTOR	<input type="checkbox"/>
UNITED STATES	<input type="checkbox"/>
JANUARY	
FEBRUARY	
MARCH	
APRIL	
MAY	
JUNE	
JULY	
AUGUST	
SEPTEMBER	
OCTOBER	
NOVEMBER	
DECEMBER	

VIST
A-1

JUNIOR LEADER DEVELOPMENT IN ARMY UNITS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Requirement:

The Center for Army Leadership has an ongoing interest in more closely relating institutional leadership training with training in operational units. To contribute to this effort, the U.S. Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences gathered baseline information on practices and procedures for developing the leadership skills of junior leaders in unit settings.

Procedure:

Staff members developed and piloted guides for interviewing battalion commanders, command sergeants major, company commanders, company first sergeants, and platoon leaders about unit procedures for developing leadership skills. Those interviewed were members of armor, mechanized infantry, and light infantry units at Forts Campbell, Carson, Ord, Polk, Riley, and Stewart.

Findings:

Wide variability exists across units concerning personal criteria used by senior leaders to assess successfully developing leadership skills. Both junior and senior leaders expressed satisfaction with the effectiveness of unit practices used to develop these skills and contributed a number of suggestions for improving leadership development in schools and units.

Utilization of Findings:

The findings of this study can be used by the sponsor to strengthen the link between institutional and operational leadership training.

JUNIOR LEADER DEVELOPMENT IN ARMY UNITS

CONTENTS

	Page
INTRODUCTION	1
METHOD	1
Subjects	1
Procedure	1
RESULTS	2
Orientation	2
Assessment	3
Feedback	5
Leader Development Practices	6
Effectiveness of Unit Practices	11
Improving the Effectiveness of Leader Development	13
Barriers to Leader Development	15
DISCUSSION	16
REFERENCES	19
APPENDIX A.	A-1

LIST OF TABLES

Table	1. Leadership Skills Discussed with Junior Leaders During Inbriefings	3
	2. Senior Leaders' Personal Leadership Assessment Criteria	3
	3. Performances on Which Junior Leaders Received Favorable Feedback	5
	4. Performances on Which Junior Leaders Received Corrective Feedback	6
	5. Methods for Developing Leadership Skills in Junior Officers	7
	6. Opportunities To Reinforce Performance Standards for Junior Leaders	7

CONTENTS (Continued)

	Page
Table 7. Criteria Used To Determine If Leadership Skills Are Maturing	7
8. Typical Strengths of New Junior Leaders	9
9. Typical Weaknesses of New Junior Leaders	9
10. Opportunities for Junior Leaders To Develop Leadership Skills	10
11. Criteria Junior Leaders Use to Monitor Maturing Leadership Skills	11
12. Methods Junior Leaders Use To Improve Leadership Performance	11
13. Criteria Senior Leaders Use To Evaluate the Effectiveness of Unit Leader Development Practices	12
14. Senior Leaders' Suggestions for Improving Unit Leader Development Practices	13
15. Junior Leaders' Suggestions for Improving Unit Leader Development Practices	14
16. Barrier to Leader Development Suggested by Senior Leaders	15
17. Barriers to Leader Development Suggested by Junior Leaders	16

JUNIOR LEADER DEVELOPMENT IN ARMY UNITS

Introduction

The United States Army is committed to developing capable and confident leaders. Leader development begins as part of institutional training. Army doctrine (Field Manual 25-100, 1990) calls for its continuance in operational settings by programming leader training and development as part of unit battle-focused training. This doctrine stipulates that unit programs include reception and integration, basic skills development, and skills sustainment and advancement. Effective and progressive leader development requires integration of both institutional and operational activities.

Steinberg (1992) investigated the implementation of the Leadership Assessment and Development Program in an Officer Basic Course. This program "is intended to assess students on the competencies that Army doctrine indicates are important for leaders, provide personalized feedback on their performance of these leadership competencies, and provide individualized leadership development plans to students to use to further develop their leadership competencies as they transition to subsequent unit assignments." She found the program to be very successful.

The study described in this report carries the same line of inquiry used by Steinberg into operational settings. Staff members gathered baseline information on current unit practices for developing junior leaders' leadership skills. Recent research (Keesling, Ford, O'Mara, McFann & Holz, in preparation, Tremble, 1922) emphasizes the critical importance of these activities in findings that indicate that unit performance in both the garrison and the field is strongly related to the competence of leaders. The sponsor of this study, the Center for Army Leadership, can use the information obtained to reach decisions that will strengthen the link between institutional and operational leadership training.

Method

Subjects

Battalion Commanders (N=9), Command Sergeants Major (N=7), Company Commanders (N=46), Company First Sergeants (N=50), and Platoon Leaders (N=20) in Armor, Mechanized Infantry and Light Infantry units at six Army posts (Forts Campbell, Carson, Ord, Polk, Riley, and Stewart) were interviewed.

Procedure

Staff members of the U. S. Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences developed, piloted, and revised interview guides (see Appendix A) covering orientation, assessment,

feedback and development of leadership skills for newly commissioned 2nd lieutenants and newly promoted staff sergeants. Each company's commander and first sergeant were interviewed together, while all other respondents were interviewed individually.

Results

Orientation

Senior Leaders' Responses. The reported procedures for integrating newly assigned troops into units progressed from initial notification through assumption of duties as a member of the unit. When units were notified that a soldier would be joining them, they sent the soldier an information packet about the post and community that included a welcome letter. When the soldier reported for duty, he was introduced to his chain of command and inbriefed by his senior officers. The inbriefings often included unit policy letters and standard operating procedures, and always included the senior officers' standards and expectations about job performance. In the case of married soldiers, it was a common practice to grant ten days of leave to settle family and personal affairs. This was intended to ensure that the soldier would be able to concentrate on his job when he joined his unit. Also, his senior officers provided him with a sponsor who was an experienced peer and who would orient him to local practices. Periodically (usually monthly) battalion commanders met with new assignees to explain the mission of the battalion and his command philosophy.

It's important to note, however, that it was not always possible to carry out this procedure in its entirety. In some cases units sent out information packets to soldiers who were, at the last minute, assigned to other units. Conversely, soldiers reported for duty to units that received no prior notification. In other cases, soldiers were assigned to units that were in the midst of field exercises or were completely involved in preparation for field exercises. The single constant, however, was that, at the earliest possible time, senior officers inbriefed new troops and acquainted them with unit standards and expectations.

Junior Leaders' Responses. Few of the platoon leaders interviewed had experienced the full orientation procedure. Several reported for duty when their units were in the field or deployed and so spent the initial period of their new assignments in staff jobs or assisting rear detachment commanders. This gave them opportunities to become familiar with the new environment before assuming leadership responsibilities. All, however, were inbriefed by their senior leaders at the earliest opportunity. When asked to recollect specific leadership skills that were mentioned during inbriefings, they reported, in addition to doctrinal leadership skills, those listed in Table 1.

Table 1

Leadership Skills Discussed with Junior Leaders During Inbriefings

- leading from the front
- setting the example
- dealing with subordinates
- responsibility for troops
- caring for soldiers
- counseling
- physical fitness
- goal setting
- organizing
- time management
- being the best tactical/technical unit member
- initiative
- honesty
- communicating
- writing

Assessment

Senior Officers' Responses. Most senior officers reported that they strongly resist allowing first impressions of newly assigned soldiers to influence their assessments of potential abilities as leaders. When staff sergeants report for duty, however, they bring with them records that disclose past assignments and test scores. For both staff sergeants and 2nd lieutenants, personal appearance and ability to communicate are noted during inbriefing, particularly if they are unsatisfactory. The real assessment of leadership skills, though, is a result of observations of job performance, especially performance during field exercises.

Senior officers were well acquainted with doctrinal leadership competencies (FM 22-100). When asked what personal criteria they used to assess leadership competencies, they offered those shown in Table 2.

Table 2

Senior Leaders' Personal Leadership Assessment Criteria (Rank Ordered by Response Frequency)

- personal appearance (including physical fitness)
- interactions with troops, peers, superiors
- technical and tactical competence
- motivation/eagerness
- teaching/training
- ability to communicate
- ability to care for soldiers
- counseling skills

- initiative
- leading from the front
- unit success
- integrity
- attentive/respectful troops
- background
- leading by example
- decisiveness/problem solving
- confidence
- dirty leadership (out-from-behind-the-desk leadership)
- military bearing
- responsibility
- Skill Development Test scores
- Officer/NCO Evaluation Report criteria
- ability to delegate
- education level
- aggressiveness/boldness
- motivating troops

(the following criteria were given by one or two respondents)

- dependability
- handling pressure
- commitment to duty
- open mindedness
- judgement
- pride
- caring for families
- maturity
- punctuality
- loyalty
- courage
- assessment by subordinates
- goal setting
- ranger school graduation
- tact
- patience
- caring about the mission.

When asked why they use those particular leadership criteria, senior officers overwhelmingly reported that they accumulated them during their careers, especially as a result of observing both successful and unsuccessful leaders.

Junior Leaders' Responses. These responses confirmed the senior leaders' contention that no formal leadership assessment was carried out until the newly assigned soldiers had opportunities to settle into their jobs. Although inbriefings included discussions of past experience and education, they emphasized unit missions, standards and expectations.

Feedback

Senior Leaders' Responses. Opportunities to assess soldiers' job performance results in feedback that directs and guides leadership development. The Army uses both formal and informal methods of providing such feedback.

Formal feedback is provided as part of mandatory periodic counseling during which Officer and NCO Evaluation Reports are completed. In addition, just about all units provide monthly written counseling for NCOs and some also do this for their platoon leaders. Following field exercises, senior leaders commonly conduct After Action Reviews that cover both unit and individual performance. In these cases, successful performance is discussed in terms of whether it resulted from good judgement or good luck, and corrective feedback is provided for less successful performance.

Informal feedback is usually on-the-spot, event-driven counseling that takes place either during field exercises or in garrison. It occurs when senior officers are observing training as well as during meetings or during social gatherings--generally any time that senior and junior leaders are able to talk together. It is this kind of feedback that senior officers prefer. It occurs with great frequency, it offers immediate reinforcement for successful performance and immediate correction for less successful performance. Also, senior leaders claim that young officers are wary about formal written counseling sessions because all negative performance assessments are required to be documented.

Junior Leaders' Responses. In addition to the formal and informal kinds of feedback described above, junior officers typically use their platoons' performance as an indicator of their success as leaders. Some also mentioned that they believe they are performing well when they observe that senior leaders' monitoring declines and/or when they are given increased responsibilities.

Platoon leaders were asked to recollect the content of feedback they received about their performance as leaders, both favorable and unfavorable. They reported that they received favorable comments on performances listed in Table 3.

Table 3

Performances on Which Junior Leaders Received Favorable Feedback (Rank Ordered by Response Frequency)

- tactical performance
- planning
- taking charge
- caring for soldiers
- leading by example

- organizing
- handling stress
- being hard charging
- physical fitness
- raising morale
- carrying out the toughest missions
- hard work
- leadership style
- having prior service experience
- successful inspections
- briefing
- communicating
- consistency
- decisiveness
- sincerity
- problem solving
- filling a leadership vacuum
- innovation.

Table 4 shows performances on which they reported receiving unfavorable feedback.

Table 4

Performances on Which Junior Leaders Received Corrective Feedback
(Rank Ordered by Response Frequency)

- following up on delegations to subordinates
- keeping senior officers informed
- too much and too little initiative
- choosing training tasks
- administration
- writing skills
- bad temper
- insensitivity to troops
- ignorance of legal procedures
- counseling older soldiers
- harshness with troops
- easiness with troops
- excessive friendliness with troops
- insufficient attention to standards
- misbehavior of enlisted soldiers.

Leader Development Practices

Senior Leaders' Responses. Senior leaders acknowledged that they do not develop individual plans for developing leadership skills in junior officers except in cases of unsatisfactory performance. In addition to the developmental guidelines afforded by formal and informal feedback, however, they use a variety of methods to develop leadership skills. Among the most common are those listed in Table 5.

Table 5

Methods for Developing Leadership Skills in Junior Officers

- Officer and NCO Professional Development classes
- military and civilian education
- classes for NCOs during Sergeant's Time
- Train the Trainer Programs
- requiring junior leaders to teach classes covering subjects in which they are weak
- preparing and delivering briefings and presentations
- pairing with a strong, experienced peer
- providing opportunities to perform one level up
- rotating staff and line assignments
- assigning special and additional duties.

When asked about methods they use to ensure that developing leaders maintain an awareness of performance standards, senior leaders responded that platoon sergeants continually communicate and reinforce these standards. They also take advantage of opportunities to restate the standards as described in Table 6.

Table 6

Opportunities To Reinforce Performance Standards for Junior Leaders

- during counseling
- during informal interactions
- at morning formations
- at weekly staff meetings
- at battalion commanders' monthly meetings
- during Officer and NCO Professional Development classes
- by posting the standards.

Senior leaders were asked about the criteria they use to decide whether junior leaders' skills are developing and maturing. They reported that they look for the changes listed in Table 7.

Table 7

Criteria Used To Determine If Leadership Skills Are Maturing (Rank Ordered by Response Frequency)

- improved technical/tactical performance
- interactions with subordinates, peers, superordinates
- troops' training success
- increasing initiative/innovation
- increasing confidence
- successful communication
- improved caring for troops
- attitude about job
- physical fitness/military bearing

- improved planning/organizing/prioritizing
- ambition
- increasing decisiveness
- ability to cope with stress
- adaptability/flexibility
- responsibility
- trust in subordinates
- troops' appearance/fitness
- timeliness
- leading by example
- self discipline
- self improvement
- perseverance
- ability to delegate
- motivation

(the following criteria were mentioned by one or two respondents)

- reenlistment rates
- performance at one level up
- assertiveness
- efficiency
- enforcing standards
- trust in subordinates
- accountability
- integrity
- taking charge
- performance of additional duties
- success in developing subordinates
- behavior in social situations
- success with briefings and presentations
- assignments as special platoon leaders
- selections to be drill sergeants or recruiters
- dealing with personal problems
- achieving "distinguished graduate" at Basic Noncommissioned Officer Courses.

When asked whether newly assigned junior leaders generally meet their expectations, most senior leaders said yes. When asked whether these junior leaders usually have good ideas about ways to improve leadership skills, the majority also answered yes. When asked whether these new assignees are insightful about their strengths and weaknesses as leaders, they replied that the much more experienced staff sergeants tend to be very insightful, whereas the new platoon leaders benefit from advice and guidance in these areas.

Senior leaders reported that typical strengths of new junior leaders include those listed in Table 8.

Table 8

Typical Strengths of New Junior Leaders

- good technical skills
- caring for soldiers
- leading by example
- good communication
- good physical condition/military bearing
- good training, writing and counseling skills
- good motivation, attitudes, and enthusiasm.

Typical weaknesses were reported to be those listed in Table 9.

Table 9

Typical Weaknesses of New Junior Leaders

- poor listening, communicating and writing skills
- poor counseling skills
- poor human relations skills
- poor administrative skills
- poor technical/tactical skills
- poor physical fitness
- inadequate ethics and values
- impracticality
- indecisiveness
- immaturity
- lack of confidence
- lack of initiative
- inability to care for soldiers
- lack of moral strength
- excessive desire to be liked
- inability to discriminate personal from professional judgement
- unwillingness to take on challenging jobs
- inability to handle disciplinary problems
- inability to handle unexpected problems
- inability to reconcile being in charge with learning from platoon sergeants.

When newly assigned leaders fail to meet the expectations of senior officers for leadership development, there are a variety of procedures followed to attempt to redress the situation. In cases in which informal corrective feedback is ineffective, senior officers carry out formal written counseling that documents the problem, recommend actions to correct the problem, and then schedule another counseling session (commonly in 30 days) at which the problem will be discussed. The counselor may provide a letter of concern to the soldier, a copy of which is placed in his personnel file. Senior officers make every attempt to resolve the problem, providing training if needed, in order to protect the

Army's investment in the junior leader. When they judge that they have exhausted every resource, they may take disciplinary action such as extra duty. If they judge that further efforts to resolve the problem would be futile, they may choose among a variety of alternatives including adverse Officer or NCO Evaluation Reports, relief for cause, bars to reenlistment, reduction in rank, or denial of promotion. Ultimately, however, they must choose between rehabilitative transfer and separation from the Army. A substantial number of senior leaders expressed dissatisfaction with rehabilitative transfer because they felt that it constituted passing the problem along to someone else.

Junior Leaders' Responses. Platoon leaders confirmed that no formal leader development plans were made, but that a variety of practices contributed to their developing leadership skills. Some of these practices are shown in Table 10.

Table 10

Opportunities for Junior Leaders To Develop Leadership Skills

- attending military schools
- being selected as specialty platoon leaders
- organizing complex exercises and social events
- professional reading and self study
- attending Officer Professional Development classes
- performing at the next higher levels
- developing personal goals sheets.

When asked who monitored the development of their leadership skills, most platoon leaders responded that company commanders performed these duties. They also mentioned company executive officers, battalion commanders, platoon sergeants, first sergeants, peers, and command sergeants major. They reported that monitoring methods included observations of field and garrison performance, formal and informal counseling, and platoon leaders' daily reports to company commanders.

Some platoon leaders claimed that the self monitoring they carry out to evaluate their own development as leaders is a continuous process, whereas others reported bi-monthly evaluations. Some criteria they use to determine if their leadership skills are maturing are shown in Table 11.

Table 11

Criteria Junior Leaders Use To Monitor Maturing Leadership Skills
(Rank Ordered by Response Frequency)

- successful platoon performance
- ability to learn from peers
- increasing confidence

(the following criteria were mentioned by one or two respondents)

- improving management
- improving technical/tactical skills
- improving decision making
- better planning
- better physical training
- better communicating and counseling skills
- Officer Evaluation Report Support Form standards
- comments of evaluators
- greater candor, courage and commitment
- more frequent professional reading
- less need for a role model to imitate.

Platoon leaders were asked what steps they remembered taking to modify their performance as leaders. They responded with the listing in Table 12.

Table 12

Methods Junior Leaders Use To Improve Leadership Performance

- improving writing skills
- improving legal skills
- improving counseling skills
- improving planning skills
- making greater efforts to be tactful
- trying to control tempers
- trying to be less overbearing
- trying to distance themselves from their troops
- trying to pay more attention to soldiers' feelings
- allowing NCOs to do their jobs without interference
- making more time for personal study
- more closely monitoring personal and platoon performance
- enduring frustrations better
- maintaining records of successful problem solving.

Effectiveness of Unit Practices

Senior Leaders' Responses. Senior leaders were asked to rate the success of unit practices that focus on developing leadership skills. The great majority expressed complete satisfaction with the job they were doing. When asked what

criteria they use to evaluate the success of these efforts, they reported those listed in Table 13.

Table 13

Criteria Senior Leaders Use To Evaluate the Effectiveness of Unit Leader Development Practices (Rank Ordered by Response Frequency

- mission success
- increasing initiative
- unit discipline

(the following were mentioned by one or two respondents)

- locally developed quarterly questionnaire
- quarterly sensing sessions
- daily observations
- frequent communications
- observing leader training
- checking counseling statements
- soldiers' self development
- preparation for missions
- feedback during gripe sessions
- Skill Development Test scores
- maintenance records
- unit morale
- comparisons with other units
- increasing confidence of leaders
- troops' respect for leaders
- weapons qualifications
- physical training
- caring for soldiers
- time management
- writing and delivering operation orders
- pride
- motivation
- attitudes
- moral character
- courage
- competence
- candor.

Junior Leaders' Responses. Asked to rate the effectiveness of leader development practices in their units, most platoon leaders gave them very favorable ratings. Asked to rate their personal efforts to develop as leaders, most also rated these efforts favorably. They also reported that, in any case in which they felt they needed extra guidance or wanted to confirm their judgements, most would seek out the company commander, followed by their peers, the company executive officer, the first sergeant and the platoon sergeant.

Improving the Effectiveness of Leader Development

Senior Leaders' Responses. Senior leaders were asked how they would improve leader development practices in their units if they could tap any resources they wished. They offered the suggestions listed in Table 14.

Table 14

Senior Leaders' Suggestions for Improving Unit Leader Development Practices (Rank Ordered by Response Frequency)

- more time
- fewer training distractors
- more resources
- more NCOES slots
- more training and counseling time
- more field exercises
- more autonomy to control training
- more time for planning and feedback
- more opportunities to train at the next level up

(the following were mentioned by one or two respondents)

- more experiences focused on leader development
- more force on force training
- more NCOs
- better curricula and instructors for Officer Basic Courses
- better quality soldiers
- tactical certification program
- better promotion system for NCOs
- special "bonding day" for unit members
- more training areas
- full day Sergeant's Time
- formal leader development practices
- more writing requirements for NCOs
- formal leadership assessment instrument
- more hands-on training
- include NCOs and officers on staff ride to do battle analysis
- classes covering battle-focused training, caring for soldiers, problem solving, and job responsibilities
- more Officer and NCO Professional Development classes
- more cross training
- better feedback during counseling
- devote more time to NCOs and lieutenants
- involve NCOs more in military bearing, appearance and self discipline
- establish certification program for NCOs
- allow soldiers to go to schools
- carry out longer range planning
- develop job-specific leader training programs

- retain new lieutenants in their jobs for 3 years and move NCOs to new jobs faster
- trust officers more
- reduce the number of formal briefings
- make time for counseling on the training schedule
- reconcile school and unit training instruction
- have NCOs teach classes in weak areas
- improve NCO Professional Development classes in planning, conducting training and counseling
- send all squad leaders to ranger school
- make lieutenants and staff sergeants responsible for all company combat operations
- improve personal involvement with soldiers
- carry out more training with NCOs
- develop more mentoring
- make it easier to discharge people
- give special rewards to soldiers performing as leaders.

Junior Leaders' Responses. Junior leaders agreed with many of the senior leaders' recommendations for improving leadership skills development in units. Their responses included suggestions shown in Table 15.

Table 15

Junior Leaders' Suggestions for Improving Unit Leader Development Practices (Rank Ordered by Response Frequency)

- improve Officer Basic Courses
- reduce training distractors
- send combat arms lieutenants to ranger school
- establish leader internships for lieutenants (e.g., with basic training units)
- require all commissioned officers to have prior service

(the following recommendations were offered by one or two respondents)

- more resources (e.g., boots, uniforms)
- more time for NCOs to spend with soldiers
- more education opportunities for NCOs
- more field exercises
- more authority for lieutenants (e.g., UCMJ)
- have NCOs teach Officer Basic Courses
- put emphasis on developing rather than weeding out people
- put emphasis on warfighting skills rather than tradition
- start out new lieutenants in staff jobs
- reestablish Spec 7 for good soldiers who are not good with troops
- reform the rating system
- improve Officer Basic Course instructors
- abolish the Reserve Officer Training Corps

- more field training
- more opportunities for new lieutenants to shadow experienced peers
- more Officer Professional Development classes
- more professional reading time
- more time for company commanders to spend with platoon leaders.

Barriers to Leader Development

Senior Leaders' Responses. In terms of the kinds of barriers senior leaders feel interfere with developing leadership skills, they reported those shown in Table 16.

Table 16

Barriers to Leader Development Suggested by Senior Leaders (Rank Ordered by Response Frequency)

- too many training distractors
- too little time
- insufficient funds/resources
- insufficient education opportunities for NCOs
- no barriers
- excessive turbulence

(the following barriers were mentioned by one or two respondents)

- discouragement for training up to higher levels
- inadequate promotion system
- unclear NCO authority and responsibility
- delayed NCO promotions
- understaffing
- inadequate focus on training
- inability to get rid of poor performers
- current Army instability
- unavailability of technical manuals
- ambivalent authority of headquarters company command
- insufficient opportunities to train leadership
- troops' poor motivation
- absence of programs of instruction for leader development
- insufficient time in grade for 2nd lieutenants
- insufficient recognition of good leaders
- too many formal briefings
- too little planning
- mistrust between officers and troops
- poor academic skills of NCOs.

Junior Leaders' Responses. Platoon leaders' views of barriers to developing leadership skills in units are shown in Table 17.

Table 17

Barriers to Leader Development Suggested by Junior Leaders (Rank Ordered by Response Frequency)

- training distractors
- understaffing
- disruption of education month

(the following barriers were mentioned by one or two respondents)

- insufficient platoon level training
- insufficient squad level training
- insufficient training areas
- no barriers
- drill sergeant mentalities
- excessive emphasis on doctrine
- absence of real troops to lead in ranger course
- need for ratings to be glowing
- poor Officer Basic Courses
- too much oversight by senior leaders
- moving lieutenants up too quickly
- weak Primary Leadership Development Course
- too fast optempo
- too few field exercises
- non-leader special duties (e.g., boxing coach).

Discussion

The sponsor for this study, the Center for Army Leadership, has an ongoing interest in improving Army leadership training. Of particular value for this purpose is up-to-date information about the kinds of practices and programs used by experienced leaders in Army units. Of equal value are opinions and experiences gathered from the junior leaders who view such practices and programs from their own perspective.

One of the striking findings in this study is the wide variability of personal standards expressed by senior leaders. This multitude of standards has significance for several reasons. First, junior leaders need to become acquainted not only with doctrinal standards for leadership performance, but also with standards of each unit commander to whom they are assigned because personal standards are likely to be different from commander to commander. Second, these personal criteria range from those that are clearly trainable (e.g., technical/tactical skills, physical fitness) through those more difficult to train (e.g., counseling, problem solving) to those the soldier can be expected to bring to his career as a leader (e.g., integrity, boldness) and those he is expected to acquire through experience (e.g., maturity, judgement).

Additional clues that serve to inform the sponsor about opportunities to improve leadership training can be found among the

typical strengths and weaknesses reported by senior leaders about developing junior leaders. Indicators also can be found among the changes senior leaders suggest to improve leader development, as well as among their observations about barriers that exist to carrying out such development. In these areas, senior leaders' observations tend to be supported by similar responses of junior leaders.

References

- Headquarters, Department of the Army (1990). Military leadership. Field Manual 22-100. Washington, D.C.
- Keesling, J. W., Ford, P., O'Mara, F., McFann, H. & Holz, R. (In preparation). Determinants of effective performance of combat units at the National Training Center. (ARI Technical Report). Alexandria, VA: U.S. Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences.
- Steinberg, A. G. (1992). Factors influencing acceptance of formal leader development in the Army. Paper presented at the annual convention of the American Psychological Association, Washington, D.C.
- Tremble, T. R., Jr. (1992). Relationships of leadership competence with leader and unit performance effectiveness. ARI Research Report 1625. Alexandria, VA: U.S. Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences. (AD A257 240)

A P P E N D I X A

BATTALION COMMANDER AND COMMAND SERGEANT MAJOR QUESTIONS

1. To begin with, please give me an overview of what this battalion does to orient and integrate a newly commissioned lieutenant or newly promoted staff sergeant into the battalion.
2. Are there division, brigade, or battalion policies, SOPs, or guidelines on the criteria, standards, or procedures for assessing the leadership of new lieutenants (or other junior leaders) or for practices for developing their leadership capabilities? (Probe to get a description of the guidelines.)
3. Do you personally have standards for the leadership of a new lieutenant or staff sergeant? (Standards for this item means the behaviors, skills, or personal characteristics that the respondent considers in evaluating and determining the leadership effectiveness of a new lieutenant or staff sergeant.) IF THE RESPONDENT HAS LEADERSHIP STANDARDS, ASK: What are your standards? (Probe to identify the standards held for each of new lieutenants and staff sergeants.)
4. Why do you use the particular standards that you do? (Probe to learn: (1) why the respondent considers his standards to be important for consideration and (2) the doctrine or other basis for the standards)
5. Do you or does someone else in the battalion routinely communicate those standards to newly assigned lieutenants or staff sergeants? IF YES, ASK: What are the procedures used to communicate your standards? IF NO, ASK: Should you or someone else in the battalion routinely communicate those standards to newly assigned lieutenants or staff sergeants?
6. When your battalion receives a newly commissioned lieutenant or newly promoted staff sergeant, do you or does someone else in the battalion either formally or informally assess him for his leadership capabilities? IF THERE IS ASSESSMENT, RECORD WHO DOES THE ASSESSMENT AND THEN ASK: How do _____ go about assessing new lieutenants/staff sergeants for their leadership capabilities? That is, when does the assessment take place? What procedures are used? Are there certification programs or counseling and development programs that you initiate? How frequently is the assessment done? Is any assessment written?
7. After or as a new lieutenant/staff sergeant is assessed in this battalion, is he given feedback on his leadership capabilities? IF FEEDBACK IS GIVEN, ASK: When or under what circumstances is he given feedback?
8. How is he given feedback? That is, what procedures are used to give feedback to a new lieutenant/staff sergeant? Who gives the feedback? (Probe to determine whether the procedures allow the new leader to make an input.)

9. After or as a new lieutenant/staff sergeant is assessed, how does the battalion plan activities for developing his leadership capabilities? (Probe to describe whether and how the activities are tailored to the individual needs of individual leaders and how, if at all, individual leaders make input into the planning.)
10. What training, job assignments, self development activities, or mentoring-type relationships does this battalion use to develop the leadership of new lieutenants/staff sergeants?
11. As a lieutenant/staff sergeant performs in this battalion, what in his performance or behavior do you look for to determine that his leadership is maturing or developing? How do you go about determining that development is taking place?
12. As a lieutenant's/staff sergeant's leadership is developing, when does this leader receive feedback on the progress/maturation of his leadership capabilities? What feedback is given?
13. What do you do if a new lieutenant/staff sergeant is not meeting your expectations for development of his leadership capabilities? Do you have remedial practices for such an occurrence?
14. In your experience, how well do new lieutenants/staff sergeants meet your expectations with respect to the leadership capabilities important to their effectiveness as leaders? Are there leadership capabilities on which new leaders are typically strong or typically weak? If so, which ones?
15. In your experience, how aware or insightful are new lieutenants/staff sergeants of their own strengths and weaknesses as leaders?
16. In your experience, do new lieutenants/staff sergeants have good ideas or some sensing of what they can or need to do to improve their leadership skills?
17. How do you go about evaluating the success of leader development practices in your battalion?
18. Based on your experience, how successful have your battalion's practices been in developing the leadership capabilities of lieutenants and staff sergeants?
19. If you were able to do so, how would you improve the leader development practices in your battalion?
20. What barriers or problems do you have in providing leadership development? How could these problems be overcome?

COMPANY COMMANDER AND FIRST SERGEANT QUESTIONS

1. To begin with, give me an overview of what this company does to orient and integrate a newly commissioned lieutenant or newly promoted staff sergeant into the company.

2. When your company first receives a newly commissioned lieutenant or newly promoted staff sergeant, do you or does someone else in the company either formally or informally assess him for his leadership capabilities? (Record who assesses lieutenants and staff sergeants and whether the assessment is formal or informal.) IF THERE IS ASSESSMENT IN THE COMPANY, GO TO NEXT QUESTION. IF THERE IS NO ASSESSMENT IN THE COMPANY, GO TO QUESTION 9.

3. After you receive a new lieutenant or staff sergeant, how do you go about assessing him for his leadership capabilities? What procedures do you use? Are there certification programs that you use? Are there counseling and development programs that you initiate? How frequently do you do it? Is any assessment written?

4. Are there certain criteria--skills, competencies, or personal characteristics--that you use routinely to assess the leadership of a newly assigned?

Criteria for lieutenants

Criteria for staff sergeants

____ Yes
____ No

____ Yes
____ No

If YES to criteria for either type of leader, ask: What are the criteria that you use to assess a newly. . .? (Probe to get a description for each type of leader assessed. If NO to criteria, go to question 7.)

5. Why do you use the particular criteria that you do? (Probe to learn: (1) why the respondent considers his criteria to be important for assessment and (2) the doctrine or other basis for the criteria.)

6. For your assessment criteria, do you have "standards" or some other basis against which you judge the adequacy of a new leader or that you use to determine his strengths and weaknesses? What are the standards that you use? (Note--If these questions fail to yield a description of standards, probe further to identify the behaviors or other indicators that the respondent uses to judge that a leader meets standards or to diagnose strengths and weaknesses. Maybe ask questions like, "what behaviors result in your determination that a leader meets your criteria? or "what about a leader's behavior makes you determine that the leader is weak with respect to your leadership criteria?"

7. After or as you assess a new leader, do you give him feedback

on his leadership? If YES, ask: when or under what circumstances do you give feedback?

8. How do you give feedback? That is, what procedures do you use to give feedback to a new lieutenant or new staff sergeant? (Probe to determine whether the procedures allow the new leader to make an input.)

9. Do you personally have standards for the leadership of a new lieutenant or staff sergeant? If YES, ask: what are your standards? (Probe to identify the standards held for each of new lieutenants and staff sergeants.)

10. Why do you use the particular standards that you do? (Probe to learn: (1) why the respondents consider their standards to be important for consideration and (2) the doctrine or other basis for the standards.)

11. Do you or does someone else in the company routinely communicate those standards to newly assigned lieutenants or staff sergeants? If YES, ask: what are the procedures used to communicate your standards? If NO, ask: should you or someone else in the company routinely communicate those standards to newly assigned lieutenants or staff sergeants?

12. As you become aware of the leadership capabilities of a new lieutenant or staff sergeant, do you give him feedback on his leadership? If YES, ask: when or under what circumstances do you give feedback?

13. How do you give feedback? That is, what procedures do you use to give feedback to a new lieutenant or new staff sergeant? (Probe to determine whether the procedures allow the new leader to make an input.)

14. After or as a new lieutenant or staff sergeant is assessed, how do you (or others in the company) plan activities for developing his leadership capabilities? (Probe to describe whether and how the activities are tailored to the individual needs of individual leaders and how, if at all, individual leaders make input into the planning.)

15. What training, job assignments, self development activities, or mentoring-type relationships does this company use to develop the leadership of new lieutenants or staff sergeants?

16. As a lieutenant or staff sergeant performs in this company, what in his performance or behavior do you look for to determine that his leadership is maturing or progressing? How do you go about determining that development is taking place?

17. As a lieutenant's or staff sergeant's leadership is developing, when does this leader receive feedback on the maturation/progress

of his leadership capabilities? What feedback is given?

18. What do you do if a new lieutenant or staff sergeant is not meeting your expectations for development of their leadership capabilities? Do you have remedial practices for such an occurrence?

19. In your experience, how well do new lieutenants and staff sergeants meet your expectations with respect to the leadership factors you assess? Are there factors on which new leaders are typically strong or typically weak? If so, which ones?

20. In your experience, how aware or insightful are new staff sergeants of their own strengths and weaknesses?

21. In your experience, do new lieutenants and staff sergeants have good ideas or some sensing of what they can or need to do to improve their leadership skills?

22. How do you go about evaluating the success of leader development practices in your company?

23. Based on your experience, how successful have your company's practices been in developing the leadership capabilities of lieutenants and staff sergeants?

24. If you were able to do so, how would you improve the leader development practices in your company?

25. What barriers or problems do you have in providing leadership development? How could these problems be overcome?

LIEUTENANTS' QUESTIONS

1. When you reported to your unit to take your present assignment, did one of your superior officers carry out an assessment of your needs and abilities? If yes, how soon after you reported in? Who did the assessment? Was it an informal or a more formal type of assessment?
2. Were leadership skills discussed as part of the requirements under your new assignment? If yes, what leadership skills?
3. Were expectations about your leadership performance spelled out?
4. Did you discuss the ways in which your leadership performance would be evaluated? Explain.
5. Did you (and/or the superior officer who carried out your initial assessment) generate a plan for developing your leadership skills in your new assignment?
6. Did your superior officer(s) monitor your progress as you were developing your leadership skills? If yes, who did the monitoring? Was it carried out formally or informally? About how often did this monitoring take place?
7. Were you given any feedback about your progress in developing leadership skills? If yes, by whom? How often? Describe the content of the feedback.
8. Did you get any counseling/help/support for developing your leadership skills? Explain.
9. What kinds of leadership performances were judged favorably by your superior officers? What kinds were judged to be unfavorable?
10. Did you monitor your own progress as you were developing your leadership skills? If yes, what criteria did you use to determine if you were progressing satisfactorily? How frequently did you monitor your progress?
11. Did you ever decide that you wanted to modify/correct your activities as a leader? If yes, what corrective actions did you take?
12. How would you rate the effectiveness of your superior officers' efforts to develop lieutenants' leadership skills? Explain.
13. How would you rate your own efforts to develop leadership skills? Explain.
14. What kinds of events/problems interfere with developing leadership skills in units?

15. How would you improve existing methods for developing lieutenants' leadership skills?